DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 453 751 HE 034 077

AUTHOR Nicholson, Michael W.

TITLE Adaptation of Asian Students to American Culture.

PUB DATE 2001-04-28

NOTE 29p.

PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Acculturation; *College Students; Cultural Differences;

*Foreign Students; Higher Education; *School Role; Social

Adjustment; *Student Adjustment

IDENTIFIERS *Asians

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine how Asian students at Western Michigan University (WMU) have adjusted to U.S. culture and more specifically to life at a U.S. university. I. Owie (1982) found a high degree of social alienation among foreign students at two Midwestern U.S. universities. He recommended that universities continuously evaluate their foreign students' services programs so that they function with optimum effectiveness in making foreign students feel at home. The subjects for this study consisted of 10 Asian students at WMU who were interviewed using the Asian Student Adjustment Survey, a 22-item questionnaire developed by the investigator. The questions generated student comments that were summarized and often quoted for illustrative purposes. This study provided insights from these international students about their problems and concerns at WMU. It was determined that the major problem concerned their lack of English proficiency. The questionnaire is attached. (Author/SLD)



Running head: ADAPTATION OF ASIAN STUDENTS

Adaptation of Asian Students to American Culture Michael W. Nicholson, Ed.D. Graduate Student Indiana University South Bend April 28, 2001

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

M. NICHOLSEN

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION Office of Educational Research and Improvement EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

- CENTER (ERIC)
 This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

	Adaptation of Asian Students	2
Table of Co	ontents	
List of Tables		3
Abstract		4
Introduction		5,
Literature Review		. 5
Participants and Setting		10
Methodology and Analysis		10
Findings		11
Discussion		22
Suggestions for Further Research		23
Summary		24
References		25
Appendix		26



List of Tables

Table 1 Country of Origin, Ethnicity, and Gender 11



Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine how Asian students at Western Michigan University (WMU) have adjusted to American culture and more specifically to life at an American university. Owie (1982) found a high degree of social alienation among foreign students at two Midwestern United States universities. He recommended that the universities continuously evaluate their foreign students' services programs to ensure that they function with optimum effectiveness in making foreign students feel at home. The subjects for this study consisted of 10 Asian students at WMU who were interviewed by this investigator using the Asian Student Adjustment Survey, a 22-item questionnaire developed by the investigator. The questions generated comments from the students that were summarized and often quoted for illustrative purposes. This study provided insight from 10 internationals as to the nature of their problems and concerns at WMU.



Introduction

This is a study of how Asian students at Western Michigan University (WMU) have adjusted to American culture and specifically life at an American university. Whether or not these students succeed depends on a number of factors including financing, skill in learning English, and adaptability to American culture. American institutions of higher learning are often ready to accept international students because they provide much needed revenues in times of declining enrollments and rising costs. Furthermore, the enrollment of international students also enhances the education of American students. Deither Haenicke (1994), then president of WMU, in his State of the University address stated: "Part of the American higher education system already has become economically dependent on international talent. . . . International students and faculty members on our campus provide an important cultural contact for our domestic students" (p. 1). Once these students arrive on campus, the university community has a responsibility to help them adjust to university and community life.

The purpose of this action research project was to provide insight from the international students themselves as to the nature of their problems and concerns at WMU. Information gained from this study will help the university community to better plan for and assist these students in ways that will help them have a successful and positive learning experience.

Literature Review

The social alienation, adaptation, and adjustment of international students in the United States has been the subject of a number of studies in the



last two decades. Owie (1982) conducted a study of 53 foreign students from two Midwestern United States universities. His purpose was to investigate the level of social alienation among these students. There was a positive correlation between social alienation and powerlessness, meaninglessness, and normlessness. He found that the level of social alienation among these students was higher than that which would be expected to occur by chance. He recommended that the universities continuously evaluate their foreign students' services programs to ensure that they function with optimum effectiveness in making foreign students feel at home. He also recommended that the entire university community including faculty, students, and other administrators be involved in programs and activities with foreign students.

Dillard and Chisolm (1983) reported on a number of studies involving counseling relationships with international students. They discovered that most international students placed a higher importance on academic success and professional training as opposed to concerns about social adjustment and involvement with American culture. They also found that international students, while having a greater need for professional counseling assistance than American students, are more likely to consult with friends and family members about matters involving psychological stress than with professional counselors. They also point out that much of the counseling relationship involves nonverbal communication. They concluded that counselors of international students need to be familiar with the cultural characteristics of these students in order to have positive relationships which lead to productive outcomes. They recommend an active program of reading and participation in workshops and inservice programs



for attaining the necessary background and skills for effectively counseling international students.

Surdam and Collins (1984) studied the adaptation of international students on a major university campus. They defined adaptation as either the satisfaction of survival needs or the process utilized by an individual to adjust to an environment. They found that the better adapted students spent more of their leisure time with Americans. They also found that the better adapted students were those who developed a positive attitude toward religion during their time in this country rather than a negative one. Another finding was that two-thirds of the students did not perceive discrimination as a personal problem. Those who perceived discrimination as a personal problem were significantly less well adapted than those who did not perceive it as a personal problem. Finally, they found that the students made infrequent use of student services. While most students made use of the Office of International Programs for immigration concerns and passports, very few went there for academic advice or personal counseling. The authors recommended a continuation of programming for international students including such subjects as study skills, cross-cultural communication, and English language skills.

Schrom and Lauver (1988) studied the alienation among the international students at a large Southwestern United States university. Alienation has been defined as including three elements: powerlessness, meaninglessness, and social estrangement. They found that non-European undergraduates who spend little time with others are the most likely candidates for alienation. They recommended developing orientation programs which encourage international



students to become acquainted with Americans and providing opportunities for such interaction. An intradepartmental buddy system whereby American students are encouraged to become personal hosts to international students could be established.

Wang, Sedlacek, and Westbrook (1992) studied the attitudes of Asian American students toward involvement in student organizations. They found that these students seemed to like to mix socially with their white counterparts and rarely felt ignored or isolated. They also found that the Asian Americans did not make much use of the university student office or the career development office.

Henderson, Milhouse, and Cao (1993) studied the culture shock experienced by Chinese students in an American university. Culture shock arises out of a discrepancy between the students' home country cultural norms and American life-styles. This diversity creates feelings of hostility, tension, frustration, anxiety, anger, and stress. The most common academic problem experienced by the students in their study pertained to language difficulties.

Associated with feelings about being understood are feelings of acceptance and appreciation. However, confusion, frustration, depression, and low self-esteem are the results of not being understood. Lack of adequate financial support was also a source of stress among the Chinese students in this study. The students tended to be unassertive, shy, and had few non-Chinese friends.

Abe, Talbot, and Geelhoed (1998) studied the adaptation to campus life of 60 newly admitted international students at a public, Midwestern university. The purpose of the study was to: (1) analyze what effect a peer program had on the awareness, knowledge, and use of campus resources by international students;



(2) assess the adjustment of these students in terms of the effects of ongoing, organized interaction with host students; and (3) compare the scores on the adjustment scales between students from non-Asian countries to those from Asian countries. The authors found: (1) that the peer program had a significant positive effect on the adjustment of the international students; (2) that those international students who had previously lived in the United States were better able to handle the societal and institutional demands of campus life; and (3) that students from Asian countries experience more adjustment difficulties to college life than do students form non-Asian countries. The authors recommended that more research be conducted to understand why and how the college experience challenges Asian students.

Henderson et al. (1993) offered nine recommendations to assist the Asian students in the management of culture shock. They are: (1) *Be mentally prepared*. The sojourner (Asian student) must try to be sympathetic and non-judgmental about another culture and its people. He or she must try to become immersed in the new culture. (2) *Be culturally prepared*. Before leaving their home countries, sojourners should learn as much as possible about the host country and how living conditions there might be different from those at home. (3) *Be linguistically prepared*. International students need to learn as much of the host language as possible in order to reduce failures and feelings of helplessness. (4) *Be involved with hosts*. Students should make every attempt to socialize with the people of the host culture because those international students who socialize have fewer adjustment problems than those who remain isolated from their hosts. (5) *Be creative and experimental*. International



students must be willing to expose themselves to many types of people and ideas in order to expand their horizons and be able to function successfully in an increasingly complex society and world. (6) Be culturally sensitive. Sojourners need to be aware of the customs and traditions of the host country. If opinions must be rendered, emphasis should be given to the host country's positive aspects. (7) Be patient and flexible. In a new environment sojourners must be willing to live with inconveniences and wait for answers which may take time to materialize. (8) Be realistic in expectations. It may be that some students will have to reduce their needs and limit their expectations in order to lessen disappointments. (9) Accept the challenge of intercultural experiences. Being open to new ideas and ways of doing things provides more opportunities for personal growth and allows the intercultural experiences to be more fulfilling.

Participants and Setting

The subjects for this study consisted of 10 of the Asian students at WMU with whom the investigator has had contact. All of them were full-time undergraduate or graduate students who resided on campus. Included were both married and unmarried students.

Methodology and Analysis

A 22-question interview instrument was designed with reference to the literature and was reviewed by the course instructor before being prepared in its final form. The Asian Student Adjustment Survey is found in the Appendix. Interviews with all 10 students were held in January 2001. Responses were recorded on the questionnaire during the interviews which averaged about an hour. A question by question analysis follows which includes summary



statements and illustrative quotations.

Findings

The responses to the first two questions regarding demographic data are combined into one table.

- 1. What is your country of origin and ethnicity?
- 2. What is your gender?

Table 1 indicates the country of origin, ethnicity, and gender of the 10 students. The students came from six different countries and represented four different ethnic groups. Five men and five women participated.

Table 1
Country of Origin, Ethnicity, and Gender

Country of Origin	Ethnicity	G	ender
		Male	Female
Hong Kong	Chinese	1	0
Indonesia	Chinese	0	1
Japan	Japanese	1	2
People's Republic of China	-		
(mainland)	Chinese	2	0
Republic of China (Taiwan)	Taiwanese	0	1
Thailand	Thai	1	. 1



3. Why did you choose to come to Western Michigan University (WMU)?

There was a variety of responses to this question. Thirty percent of the students indicated that they had consulted a book to find WMU. These students added: "I have to be close to water. Kalamazoo is an interesting name. It means 'boiling water' in Chinese"; "A relative is here"; and "I was offered financial support." Twenty percent of the students had friends that had studied at WMU. These two students also said: "I took a previous degree in Michigan, and I like the four seasons"; and "A friend who graduated from WMU told me that this University is OK and that the tuition is not expensive." Other responses were: "WMU has my major"; "I met three Japanese WMU instructors who came to Japan"; "I saw a magazine featuring WMU"; "I applied to several schools and WMU accepted me"; and "A college in Japan and WMU are sister schools."

The responses indicated that most of the students (70%) were experiencing some difficulty with the English language. Some comments were: "It is OK for social purposes. Academically, I need some help"; "Public speaking creates some tension"; "If I go to the store, I have no problem. But if I go to class, I have a hard time participating in discussions"; and "I can only understand about half of the lectures. I need to spend much time to read a book." Thirty percent of the students indicated "Yes" to the question without qualification indicating that their level of English proficiency meets their social and academic needs.

academic and social needs at WMU?



5. Are you receiving any instruction in English now?

Ninety percent of the students said they were not receiving any instruction in English at the present time. Comments included: "No, I teach myself"; and "No, I majored in English in Japan". However, one student (10%) replied in the affirmative and said, "Yes, I am taking English 361, a required English course for those who scored below 550 on the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)." It is interesting that even though most students do not feel that their level of English proficiency is adequate to meet their academic or social needs, the only student who is taking formal training in English is required to do so because of a TOEFL deficiency.

6. What kinds of activities do you engage in for your social life?

The activities they cited included: going shopping, traveling, attending church and Bible study groups, attending movies, eating with friends, attending parties, backpacking, playing basketball, swimming, skiing, snow boarding, aerobics, attending music concerts, reading, going to bars, dorm activities, attending potluck dinners, and visiting in American homes. One student said, "I have no time for this, but I come for American dinner sometimes."

7. What social or cultural organizations do you belong to?

Organizations students mentioned were: church and Bible study groups, the American Occupational Therapy Association (student member), the swimming club for WMU students, and the physics club. Also mentioned were the various ethnic student associations in which the students hold automatic or voluntary memberships by virtue of their nationalities.



8. What is the main problem you have had in this country?

The most frequently identified problem was difficulty with the language. Sixty percent of the students identified language or communication as their main problem. This supports the finding of Henderson et al. (1993) that the most common academic problem experienced by the Chinese students had to do with language difficulties. Twenty percent of the students mentioned financial concerns including money for tuition, rent, and textbooks. For another student, "Weather causes breathing problems because I have asthma." Still another student said, "I don't identify with things going on here. I want to be more involved."

9. What other academic or social problems have you had here?

A number of different types of problems were mentioned. They included: transportation, food, the cold weather, and the snow. Social problems, according to one student, involved "difficulty in making American friends, difficulty in getting money from the ATM, and knowing how to pay at the store." Another student said, "My friends who cannot speak English well are treated differently in the stores, and I feel badly that they are treated this way." Still another student said, "Some Americans don't want to talk to international students." Cultural problems were reflected in the following comments: "Most Asians don't like to be touched on the head"; and "We don't understand how American people think. We want to know how to make them happy. Both sides are wary of each other." Also mentioned were problems with the educational system. One student cited "rude teachers who would not explain things, ignore questions, and swear." Another had difficulty with writing long papers. A student commenting on the problem of



homework said, "There is a lot of it, and it keeps me very busy." Another student said, "Grading in China is based on the final exam. Here it is based on total assignments."

10. Is the interracial climate on this campus friendly or hostile? Explain.

Most of the students (70%) indicated that the interracial climate was friendly. One student said, "People smile to each other and are helpful. They help me with problems." Another said, "If I am in Japan, I never talk to foreigners. Here they ask me for directions." Still another said, "Between students and students it is good. American students are helpful. Church organizations are especially helpful. We appreciate their hospitality." Other students (30%) had ambivalent opinions on the issue. One said, "It depends on each individual. Some Americans are not accepting of Asians. Some are. The vast number of foreigners are open to each other." A female student said, "In small classes they are friendly, but not in big classes. White girls are not friendly." Another student indicated "neither" in responding to the question and then explained, "Normal American people are not aggressive, but they do not accept me. They are only polite and friendly, but you cannot go into a deep relationship with them."

The responses varied on this question. Thirty percent said, "Yes." One student said, "Yes, in the physics lab we work in pairs. Because I am international, Americans don't want to work with me. I don't like it when we have to work in pairs." Another student said, "Yes, in China there are many games to play like cards and outdoor games. There are not many games played here." Still another said, "Yes, the first four months, but I received help from other



internationals and Westwood Baptist Church." Thirty percent indicated that they had not felt isolated on the campus. One student said, "No, I am so busy." Another said, "No, people are willing to talk in class, and I talk to international students who are like me." Still another said, "No, if I have problem, I can talk to my friends from Thailand." The remaining 40% of the responses were somewhat ambivalent. One student said, "Not much, I have had close friends since my freshman year. I always found friends to socialize with." Another replied, "Sometimes, when I don't understand my homework." Still another said, "Yes and no. It happens so often in class when I cannot get into discussions, otherwise, no." Finally, a student said, "Of course, only in terms of the social life, but I have too much to do. I don't have time to feel isolated. If I go to (Chinese) church, people are very friendly."

12. Are most of your friends Americans or international people? Explain.

A strong majority (80%) of the respondents indicated that most of their friends were international people. One said, "It's easier to understand each other. There is a link between us. We have to learn to deal with people from other cultures without causing any trouble." Another said, "We have lots of things in common. We try to encourage each other. I have some American friends over the age of 40 but not below 30. I can't relate to them and can't talk deeply with them." Still another said, "Asian, because we can speak slowly, and we think the same." A fourth said, "The language (English) is a problem. We are completely different such as how we dress and how we think. People from Asia are similar." These statements support the findings of Henderson et al. (1993) which suggested that confusion and frustration are products of not being



understood. In contrast, one Japanese student said that most of his friends are Americans: "Most people you see are Americans. Most students in the dorm are Americans. My roommates off campus were Americans." Showing a balance in his friendships, another student replied, "The same. I have some of both." Finally, one of the students previously quoted added a revealing postscript to her interview that fits in best at this point. She said, "Young girls want American boy friends. I don't understand. I don't think that this is a serious relationship. It won't last. I cannot stand their procedures. Abortion clinics are doing a good business with Asians, mostly Japanese!"

13. Would you like to have more American friends? Why or why not?

Most respondents (70%) replied in the affirmative, and some said they thought American friends could help them learn English and more of American culture. Twenty percent were noncommittal. One student said, "It doesn't make any difference. I would like just any friends without regard to ethnicity or nationality." Another said, "I am satisfied with things." Finally, the one student who replied in the negative said, "No, we don't have equal status. It's hard. It is easier to communicate with Chinese. We don't have common interests with Americans."

14. Do you have more interaction with other students in larger or in smaller classes?

Most of the students (90%) felt that smaller classes afforded them the opportunity for more interaction with one another. One said that in smaller classes "You have more opportunity to express yourself and are encouraged to do so by professors." Another said, "A small class for me is more comfortable.



Large classes break up into groups, but some Americans may not want to talk to me because of language problems." Still another said, "In small groups we can talk more. Each person has more time to talk. In big groups you need to speak fast." Finally, the only student who did not indicate "smaller" classes said, "It does not matter. I never attend big classes. It depends on individuals."

15. How have other students been of help to you in adjusting to university life?

The variety of responses included: showing them around campus, introducing them to friends, talking with them, editing papers, fixing computers, taking them shopping, giving them textbooks, helping them to move, fixing their cars, and giving them a place to stay temporarily. One student said, "When I have questions, I always ask someone near me. When I work in lab groups, we have to write conclusions in class. I am slow, and my partner always helps me."

16. Are there other ways that students can be of help to you?

Replies indicated that other students can be of help to these students by finding good research articles, by being friendly and open minded, by helping with classes, study, and housing, by having potluck dinners, by providing transportation, and by generally assisting them without being asked. One student described a particular classroom situation in answer to this question: "Last semester I took a class with a professor who didn't like international students. I didn't want to go to his office. So other students asked questions for me."

17. How can professors help you to better adjust to university life?

The students want the professors to take a personal interest in them by taking time to listen to them and to show an understanding of their respective



cultures in class discussions. They would like the professors to have more office hours for tutoring and academic advising. They want the professors to speak slowly in class and use a simpler vocabulary, to print or use good handwriting on the board, and to distribute handouts of their lecture notes. One student commented that professors should "understand things in my life, treat us to dinner with Americans, keep promises, and develop relationships and friendships with us. Our relationships should not be just academic. We need to be with their families." These results lend support to the recommendation of Owie (1982) that the entire university community including faculty should be involved in programs and activities with international students.

18. How has the WMU Office of International Student Services been of help to you in adjusting to university life?

There were mixed opinions about the usefulness of the Office. The orientation program was mentioned in one way or another as the basic service. The students also received assistance with immigration problems and in obtaining travel documents, a social security number, and an internship. The office also organized an annual trip to Lake Michigan and sponsored international festivals. Some students addressed the limited function of the Office. One said that it served "just for official purposes like obtaining travel documents." Another said, "It didn't help a lot, only with orientation, but this is about common stuff that many knew before coming." A third said the Office helped "only during orientation and with the newsletter. Otherwise it hasn't been of much help at all." In general, the replies supported the findings of Surdam and Collins (1984) who found that the students made infrequent use of student services.



19. Are there other ways that the Office of International Student Services could help you?

The students had a number of recommendations to increase the usefulness of the Office to their situations. Comments included that it should: "Help but not control the students, help with employment problems, and provide a counseling center for only internationals to deal with homesickness and interpersonal relations"; "Make available a place to stay when we arrive and tell us beforehand about transportation from the airport. When I first came, I had to take the taxi from the airport"; and "Try to exercise more authority in addressing academic problems and provide support for us in communicating our problems with our departments."

20. How can American people best help you in your time at WMU?

Suggestions offered by the students included: being friendly, talking to them, inviting them to their homes for dinner, and providing housing during the times when they cannot live in the dorms. One student said, "They can tell me how to use the bathroom facilities such as the paper towel (dispensaries)."

Another said, "Since I like to travel, they can tell me about friends and relatives in other states that I can visit."

21. What do you wish to do when you graduate or leave WMU?

Most of the students (80%) want to remain in the United States to find jobs or attend graduate school. Two students (20%) planned to return home to Taiwan and Thailand to work. Some comments were: "I want to find a job in the United States with a six-figure salary to gain two or three years of experience. Then I want to teach in the United States, get married, and have at least two



kids"; "I want to stay here to make big money because American money is eight times Chinese money"; and "I want to teach in the United States. You get reasonable pay here. The social life here is very simple. Life is complicated in China. The boss controls living conditions in China."

22. If you had it to do over, would you choose WMU as the place for your academic life? Why or why not?

Most students (60%) felt satisfied about their choice of WMU. Positive comments included: "I made the right choice. Originally my major was aero engineering, and I switched to physics. Physics professors are nice. I have studied with many Japanese graduate students who influenced me to study more. So I was lucky to meet such good people"; "Yes, WMU graduates have obtained good jobs in engineering"; "Yes, I am happy to be here. Everything is good. I want to stay here"; and "Yes, this University is good. The facilities are good such as the library, computer labs, recreation center, and dining service. Many students are here. So I have a chance to talk to them." Two students (20%) were not quite sure as to whether or not they made the right choice. One said, "I am not sure whether the answer should be 'yes' or 'no.' I would like a bigger school with more resources, but I like the study environment here. The relationship between professors and students is kind of close. We may not have this elsewhere." The other said, "Maybe I would choose a school where there are fewer Japanese students. I came here to study English. I had a chance to go to Los Angeles to be with my aunt and uncle, but I came here only to find many Japanese." One student said that he would have transferred to WMU after attending Kalamazoo Valley Community College first because of the cheaper



tuition. He added, "Other than that, WMU has been OK to good for me." Finally, the student who replied in the negative said, "No, Kalamazoo is a small city.

Jobs are hard to find. Universities are all the same, but cities are different."

Discussion

This study looked at how various Asian students at Western Michigan University (WMU) have adjusted to American culture and specifically life at the University. Interviews were held with 10 Asian students who were known to the investigator. Their responses to the 22-item instrument comprised the data basis for the study. All of the students were willing participants in the interviews and seemed genuinely interested in the opportunity to express some of their honest opinions about America and the University.

It was determined that the major problem concerned their lack of English proficiency. Most of their other problems such as academic difficulties or difficulties in making friends with Americans seemed to be an outgrowth of their difficulties with the English language.

It was concluded that other students could help these students adjust by befriending them and talking with them, by helping them with their English and with their classes, and by helping them with their nonacademic activities such as taking them shopping and other places and helping them fix their cars and computers.

Professors can help these students adjust by taking a personal interest in them, by taking time to listen to them and to show an understanding of their respective cultures in class discussions, and by inviting them to their homes for dinner. Professors could have more office hours for tutoring and academic



advising. They could speak slowly in class and use a simpler vocabulary. They could print or use good handwriting on the board and distribute printed lecture notes as handouts.

The WMU Office of International Student Services personnel could be of help to these students by dealing with employment problems, by providing a counseling center for only internationals, by providing transportation from the airport upon arrival and temporary housing, and by exercising more authority and support in addressing academic problems with their respective departments.

American people can help these students by being friendly with them, by talking to them, by inviting them to their homes for dinner, and by providing housing for them during the times when the dorms are closed. They could also tell the students about friends and relatives they have in other states whom the students could visit when they are traveling

Suggestions for Further Research

This study involved 10 international students from six Asian countries. Another study could enlarge the student base and explore some of the issues touched on in more depth. Comparisons then could be made in the responses according to country of origin, gender, age, and student status (i.e., graduate or undergraduate). Students from non-Asian countries could also be studied to determine whether or not they experience similar adjustment problems. The Office of International Student Services could be studied to examine the services available and how they are delivered. Professors and administrators could be interviewed for their perspectives on international students as could American students and American people in the community. Finally, follow-up studies of



international student graduates could be conducted to determine if their expectations of their American educational experience were ultimately realized.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine how Asian students at WMU have adjusted to American culture and more specifically to life at an American university. A review of the literature indicated that foreign students in the United States experience a high degree of social alienation. Interviews were held with 10 Asian WMU students by the investigator utilizing the Asian Student Adjustment Survey, a 22-item questionnaire developed by him. Responses to each item of the instrument were analyzed in terms of summary statements and illustrative quotations. Recommendations were given and suggestions for further research were included.



References

Abe, J., Talbot, D. M., & Geelhoed, R. J. (1998). Effects of a peer program on international student adjustment. *Journal of College Student Development*, 39, 539-547

Dillard, J. M., & Chisolm, G. B. (1983). Counseling the international student in a multicultural context. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 24,* 101-105.

Haenicke, D. (1994, February 3). Four goals designed to enhance international education. *Western News*, p. 1.

Henderson, G., Milhouse, V., & Cao, L. (1993). Crossing the gap: An analysis of Chinese students' culture shock in an American university. *College Student Journal*, *27*, 380-389.

Owie, I. (1982). Social alienation among foreign students. *College Student Journal*, *16*, 163-165.

Schram, J. L., & Lauver, P. J. (1998). Alienation in international students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 29, 146-150.

Surdam, J. C., & Collins, J. R. (1984). Adaptation of international students:

A cause for concern. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, *25*, 240-245.

Wang, Y., Sedlacek, W. E., & Westbrook, F. D. (1992). Asian Americans and student organizations: Attitudes and participation. *Journal of College Student Development*, 33, 214-221.



Appendix

Asian Student Adjustment Survey



ASIAN STUDENT ADJUSTMENT SURVEY

ASIAN STUDENT ADJUSTMENT SURVET
1. What is your country of origin and ethnicity?
2. What is your gender?
3. Why did you choose to come to Western Michigan University?
4. Do you feel that your level of English proficiency is adequate to meet your academic and social needs at WMU?
5. Are you receiving any instruction in English now?
6. What kinds of activities do you engage in for your social life?
7. What social or cultural organizations do you belong to?
8. What is the main problem you have had in this country?
9. What other academic or social problems have you had here?
10. Is the interracial climate on this campus friendly or hostile? Explain.

12. Are most of your friends Americans or international people? Explain.

11. Have you ever felt isolated on this campus? Explain.



- 13. Would you like to have more American friends? Why or why not?
- 14. Do you have more interaction with other students in larger or smaller classes?
- 15. How have other students been of help to you in adjusting to university life?
- 16. Are there other ways that students can be of help to you?
- 17. How can professors help you to better adjust to university life?
- 18. How has the WMU Office of International Student Services been of help to you in adjusting to university life?
- 19. Are there other ways that the Office of International Student Services could help you?
- 20. How can American people best help you in your time at WMU?
- 21. What do you wish to do when you graduate or leave WMU?
- 22. If you had it to do over, would you choose WMU as the place for your academic life? Why or why not?





U.S. Department of Education

Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)

National Library of Education (NLE)

Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)



REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION	d:	
Title:	sian Students to American Cu	lture
Author(s): Michael W. Nicho	olson, Ed.D.	
Corporate Source:		Publication Date:
		April 28, 2001
monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, Re	e timely and significant materials of interest to the educations of interest to the education (RIE), are usually made available to Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is g	to users in microfiche, reproduced paper cop
	eminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents	ne following three options and sign at the bottom. The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents.
PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS SEEN GRANTED BY	PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY	PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED B
sample	sample	Sample
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)	TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)	TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
Level 1 T X	Lovel 2A	Level 28
Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.	Check here for Loval 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only	Check here for Level 28 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only
Docum If permission to r	nants will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality per reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be process	nits. led at Level 1.
as indicated above. Reproduction fr contractors requires permission from	cources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit repro	s other than Erkic amployees and its syste

Printed Name/Position/Title:

(616)375

Michael W. Nicholson

Date: June

ERIC

Sign

here,→

please

Organization/Address: 1817 Tray Lane

Kalamazoo. MI 49006-5842

(ovar)

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Address:		,
Price:		
V. REFERRAL OF ER	IC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS	HOLDER:
	on release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide t	he appropriate name a
address:	on release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide t	he appropriate name a
lame:	on release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide t	he appropriate name a
address: Name:	on release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide t	he appropriate name a
If the right to grant this reproducti address: Name: Address:	on release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide t	he appropriate name a

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education 1307 New York Ave., NW Suite 300 Washington, DC 20005-4701

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
4483-A Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, Maryland 20706

Telephone: 301-552-4200
Toll Free: 800-799-3742
FAX: 301-552-4700
e-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov

e-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov WWW: http://ericfac.piccard.csc.com

EFF-088 (Rev. 2/2000)

